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AN
ALUMNI GREGORY MEMORIAL



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AN
ALUMNI GREGORY MEMORIAL

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

MEMORIAL BUILDING AND ART COLLECTION



JUNE, 1914



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AN ALUMNI GREGORY MEMORIAL

THE NEED APPRECIATED

It is agreed among those concerned that some suitable testimonial should be instituted or erected on the University campus, in honor of the man, who more than any one else, and in a large sense more than all others, laid the foundations as they were laid, and in the earlier years shaped the character and scope of the institution which has developed into the University of Illinois as we know it—Doctor John Milton Gregory, the first Regent (President).

He was elected to his high office March 12, 1867, and served with great distinction and winsome favor until September 1, 1880, when he resigned because his strength seemed to him unequal to the burden he had assumed and appeared inevitable while he continued in the position.

This is not the place for an historic account, but it is becoming to say that what transpired in those early years is now recognized in wonderful accomplishments. Out of a chaos of ideas, of widely divergent, mostly crudely formed ideals, confusedly entangled, the old with the new, the good with the bad, the possible with the impracticable, the personal with the patriotic—there came forth clearly formulated plans, splendidly organized procedures, richly prophetic beginnings, which in their fair developments makes the institution what it is today. In the preparation for the remarkable results which have followed, there was in it all and thru it all, one inspired and inspiring voice, one towering leadership, one man who devised and directed, one who eloquently pleaded when oratory was effective, one who vigorously battled when contests were unavoidable. Let any one unfamiliar with the inner history of the period, read the paper prepared by Doctor Gregory, called the "Report of the Committee on Courses of Study" etc., published in the First Annual Report of the Board of Trustees, to find at once the masterly mind enlisted in the service of the new institution during the pregnant years of its organization and development—years and activities whose influence has mightily affected the whole subsequent character and life of the University, if indeed they are not responsible for its very existence as such.

It is to this man whose memory we venerate and love; this maker, this master; this founder, this fabricator; this pilot, this captain; this father, this friend—to whom we the inheritors of the fruits of his genius and of his devoted labors, propose to provide something commemorative of his service, his consuming devotion, his prevailing power.

The University of Illinois is not, we may assume, in dire need of money, insatiable as is the absorbing maw and efficient as is its financial digestion. But the institution is a human one, it is founded on human needs, and thrives only as it touches human sympathies and desires, only

as it satisfies human aspirations and wins human affections. Fortunately it has great wealth of this kind, much more than that represented if they could be compared in financial exhibits. It is probably true that the University of Illinois leads significantly in this respect among others of its kind. There is rich abundance of good will, loyal devotion, stimulating pride, affectionate regard.

There is little however to give tangible or visible evidence of this its best asset, little to give expression to the existing wealth of esteem and love, little to demonstrate that the wise counsels and devoted, often heroic labors of founders and builders are recognized or appreciated. Kind words, glowing eulogies, are very good so far as they go, but when at their best they leave entirely untouched another form of expression embodied in material monuments. This is widely understood and people everywhere obey their best impulses and noblest instincts in erecting statues and building permanent memorial structures associated with great movements and dedicated to great men. That there is not more of it, usually comes from the want of collective endeavor. It is hard to get minds united, preferences pooled, sentiments centralized. This has been true with us. The story in a few words may be given as follows,—

HISTORY OF MOVEMENT

There was wide appreciation of the work and influence of Doctor Gregory in the earlier years; but, especially from the time the grave was made upon the campus, the thought was often expressed that some suitable testimonial should be erected to the man whose remains rest therein. This feeling all along was a general one, concurred in by officials, advocated by alumni, urged by friends, shared by students as year by year they came and went, and favored by interested people at home and abroad. The sentiment grew with the passing years, especially among alumni, until at length a conference, previously arranged for, was called on Alumni day 1912, resulting in a canvass to ascertain further what members of the Alumni Association thought should and could be done by themselves. In the mean time Mr. Homer A. Stillwell of Chicago, ex-'82, who upon a visit had sought out the grave and was touched by the small prominence given to it, offered to contribute a goodly named sum towards a suitable memorial. This stimulated action and the committee reported to the Executive Committee of the Association, in June 1913, that the feeling was very prevalent and almost unanimous that something should be done by the alumni. The amount of money suggested was most commonly put from \$25,000 to \$50,000.

The Executive Committee referred the report to the Alumni Council and by this body it was referred to the new Executive Committee with the recommendation that a special Gregory memorial committee be appointed, with Mr. S. A. Bullard as chairman, to take the matter in charge. This new Executive Committee again favored action, approved the recommendation of the Council and instructed the President of the Association to appoint the proposed memorial committee and also to call into conference the President of the University, that of the Board

of Trustees, the chairman of the Trustees' Committee on Buildings and Grounds, the members of the Alumni Executive Committee, those of the Memorial Committee and Professors Burrill and White.

After some unavoidable delays this Conference was called by Mr. Bullard, now President of the Alumni Association, for May 2, 1914, at the University, to discuss the whole matter and to decide if possible upon some definite form of memorial structure.

When the meeting was called to order there were present the following named delegates:

President James

President W. L. Abbott and Mr. O. W. Hoit of the Board of Trustees

Professors Burrill, Baker, and White of the Faculty, and

President Bullard and Messrs. J. E. Armstrong, H. M. Dunlap, F. L. Hatch and Peter Junkersfeld of the Alumni Association.

Those absent were:

Professor Talbot, Messrs. H. J. Burt, J. N. Chester, E. G. Graham, J. C. Llewellyn, J. A. Ockerson and Lorado Taft.

CONFERENCE AND COMMITTEE ACTION

After full discussion during which many suggestions were made, often widely different in character, unanimous agreement was at length reached and all voted for the following resolution:

“Resolved, that the memorial to be erected to Dr. Gregory on the University campus be a *Gregory Memorial Building and Art Collection*, that \$150,000 be raised for the purpose, and that the University Trustees be requested to assign a site for the building south of Lincoln Hall, west of the Auditorium and facing the site chosen for the new Library building.”

Later, on the same day, the recommendation of the Conference was approved by the memorial committee and Dr. T. J. Burrill was appointed director of a campaign with Messrs. Bullard, Baker and Dunlap as a subcommittee, to carry the proposition into effect.

It was a great step forward to gain this unanimous agreement on the part of the committee and the designation so clearly marked of the kind and cost of a memorial. The site selected is for one of the major campus buildings, near the center of things as the campus develops.

EXPLANATIONS

By the help of the accompanying plates the location and surroundings can be easily made out. Plate I. shows, on a small scale, the arrangements of the present buildings and wonderful suggestions for future ones. Along the west side south of Green street occur in order: the Library Building (with a new extension on the south), the Commerce Building (only the east half now up), the Womans' Building, Lincoln Hall (east half now existing), and the proposed Gregory Memorial Building, with the Auditorium directly east, across Burrill avenue. Facing this Memorial building on the south is the proposed new library

structure, marked 8 on the plate, while the new Armory, marked 7, is seen on the west.

We cannot follow further here a description of the parts of the new campus, but this plate gives evidence enough of the future outlook and shows the centralized location of the coming memorial building.

Turning to Plate II., a better understanding of the proposed building site and its immediate relations can be gained, for this shows on a larger scale this portion of the campus. In the center is the Auditorium with a proposed addition, in lighter shade, on the south. This latter faces an open park, with Burrill avenue on the west and a similar new avenue on the east, and between the building and the park is the proposed Armory avenue, crossing the campus east and west with provisions for the street railroad in a subway.

Note the L-shaped building sites on either sides of the Auditorium—that on the east suggested for the School of Music, that westward for the Gregory Memorial. The east and west extension of the latter is the part now in question with the shadowy expectation that some day the name will apply to a structure occupying this whole area.

The building now under special consideration has on the ground plan presented on Plate II., a length of 186 feet and a width of 66 feet (at the eastern end), and is to be 3 stories in height, with south face somewhat as shown in Plate III. The north face will have similar treatment, making a dignified, noble appearing structure, admirably suited to the site and to the proposed use.

As previously remarked the Alumni Association and the special cause it here espouses are extremely fortunate in having available this very acceptable, help-inspiring site, and the Association is fortunate too in the selection of the kind of a memorial which can never grow old, but which must grow in interest and value as time passes. With a good and safe place for their exhibition and preservation, richly valued additions will constantly be made to the art treasures, while older possessions will yearly gain in value as they pass from existing to historic representations.

Further to explain the relations of the proposed building with those immediately adjoining, Plates IV. and V. are added showing respectively the Auditorium and Lincoln Hall as they appear from a point in the open space in front of both buildings. From this same viewpoint the northeast perspective of the Memorial Building will show between the others. This will be understood if on turning again to Plate II. the point of view is located as designated and sight be directed to the southwest.

This association of buildings must impress everyone favorably concerning present conditions of things and nothing can better be suggested toward insurance of undated permanence and stability, whatever follows in campus development and whoever follows in University management.

The name Gregory can never be lost to, or eclipsed in, University history, but whether or not it ever becomes comparatively less important, the memorial which had its inception in the Conference Resolution of

May 2, 1914, will stand as well for other illustrious names and for the great deeds that find place in the perennial freshness of grateful appreciation. The structure and its contents is to be of a general memorial character for all time and for all worthy interests.

THE OLD ART GALLERY

Those of the older days well remember the Art Collection exhibited on the fifth floor of the "New Building" (University Hall). It was for many years the show place of the University, and visitors were always taken to it. Very often even those from far distance inquired for it, because its fame was widespread. And the influence it exerted in regard to culture and taste was certainly considerable. There are those of the student body of the 70s and 80s who now assert their whole lives have been different from what they would otherwise have been on account of this art collection.

It owed its existence to Doctor Gregory's personal efforts. He started the original movement, made personal contributions for it, received subscriptions from others after his presentations, devoted to it the proceeds of lectures and entertainments, and with the money thus secured—about \$4,000—went to Paris at his own expense and purchased the very excellent collection of casts of famous sculptural pieces, the large number of engravings and other instructive art objects. He asked of the Trustees a little money for fitting the room and installing the objects; otherwise the expenses were provided as has been told.

When the room was urgently demanded for other purposes the pieces were distributed widely in University rooms, and because they are now so disseminated they make no impression. So true is this last that it is commonly supposed they are mostly lost. This is not true. They can be largely gathered again and will make a good beginning for a new collection.

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

It is unwise to try to predict at this time what the building details will be or what will be the prominent features of the exhibit to be contained therein. A pretty good answer to such an inquiry is to be found in the outcome of a very similar project now well on in development on the campus of the University of Michigan—an Alumni Memorial Hall, dedicated May 11, 1910. It cost \$206,000 of which there was raised by an alumni committee the sum of \$156,000, and that of \$50,000 was contributed by the Board of Regents with the understanding that the building should to some extent house distinctively University affairs. The Alumni Association has headquarters in the building and a general reading room open to all also has a place here. A large sized Faculty club room in the basement is found to be very useful. A lecture room for the department of Art and Design is also provided, and a fine sky-lighted Sculpture Gallery is at present used for public assemblies.

Otherwise the building is for art exhibitions and the collections now in place represent a value beyond that of the cost of the building. The "Lewis Collection" of paintings is prominent among these. As

one enters the wide entrance hall attention is at once directed on the right to a fine bronze bas-relief of President Angell and to a similar one on the left, just unveiled, of President Tappan, the first executive. There is space on the walls of this noble hall for a dozen such large medallion figures and in time they will contribute an imposing but finely appropriate affect.

The attractive building and its abundantly interesting contents constitute something to be proud of on the part of those contributing to the fund by which the creation became possible. The largest subscription towards the building was \$10,000. Some three years were required to complete the canvass made by the members of the memorial committee wholly without financial compensation.

THE FINANCIAL CAMPAIGN

Of course it is thoroly understood that it will require a vigorous, persistently pushed campaign, and a hearty, sacrificing response to secure pledges adding up the sum named for the memorial as planned. It is a large undertaking, a very large financial proposition, which cannot be contemplated without some trepidation, and cannot be made a success without the willing assistance—helping to the hurting point—of practically every one to whom application is naturally made. But with a combined, united, fervent, heart-compelled, love-inspired, effort, magnificent results are sure to follow, and the sacrifice to the individual will be lost in the glory of the great general accomplishment. And again, let it be said, that the financial and material measure will be far outdone by the fraternal and filial benefits which the former merely serves to set forth, in the only language capable of adequate and universal interpretation. In the contributions one may have only a small share; in the full, grand benefit and blessing each may claim the whole. Each contributor in money may say of the whole, "This in affectionate good will is MY memorial gift."

The campaign for money may be said not to have begun, tho an announcement of grandly inspiring moment is otherwise to be made to the assembled Alumni Association, and when more than one such an initiatory uplift can be reported, enthusiasm sufficient to complete the job will not be wanting!

S. A. BULLARD, Springfield, Chairman
IRA O. BAKER, Urbana
T. J. BURRILL, Urbana
H. M. DUNLAP, Savoy
FRED L. HATCH, Spring Grove
O. W. HOIT, Geneseo
J. C. LLEWELLYN, Chicago
LORADO TAFT, Chicago

Committee on Gregory Memorial

Prepared for the Committee by T. J. BURRILL.

[Since the above was written the Trustees have formally assigned the site described in the foregoing for the Gregory Memorial Building]

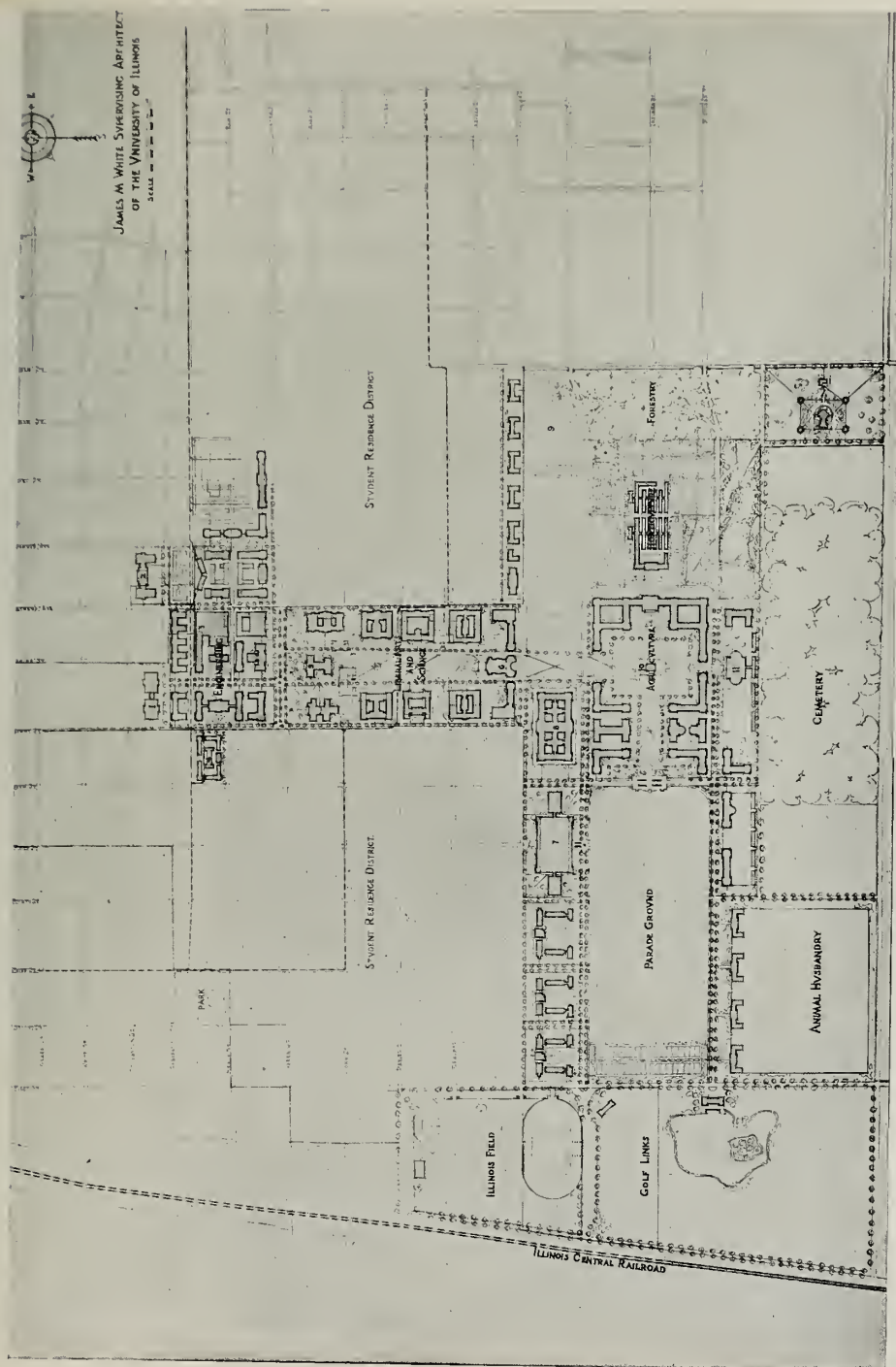
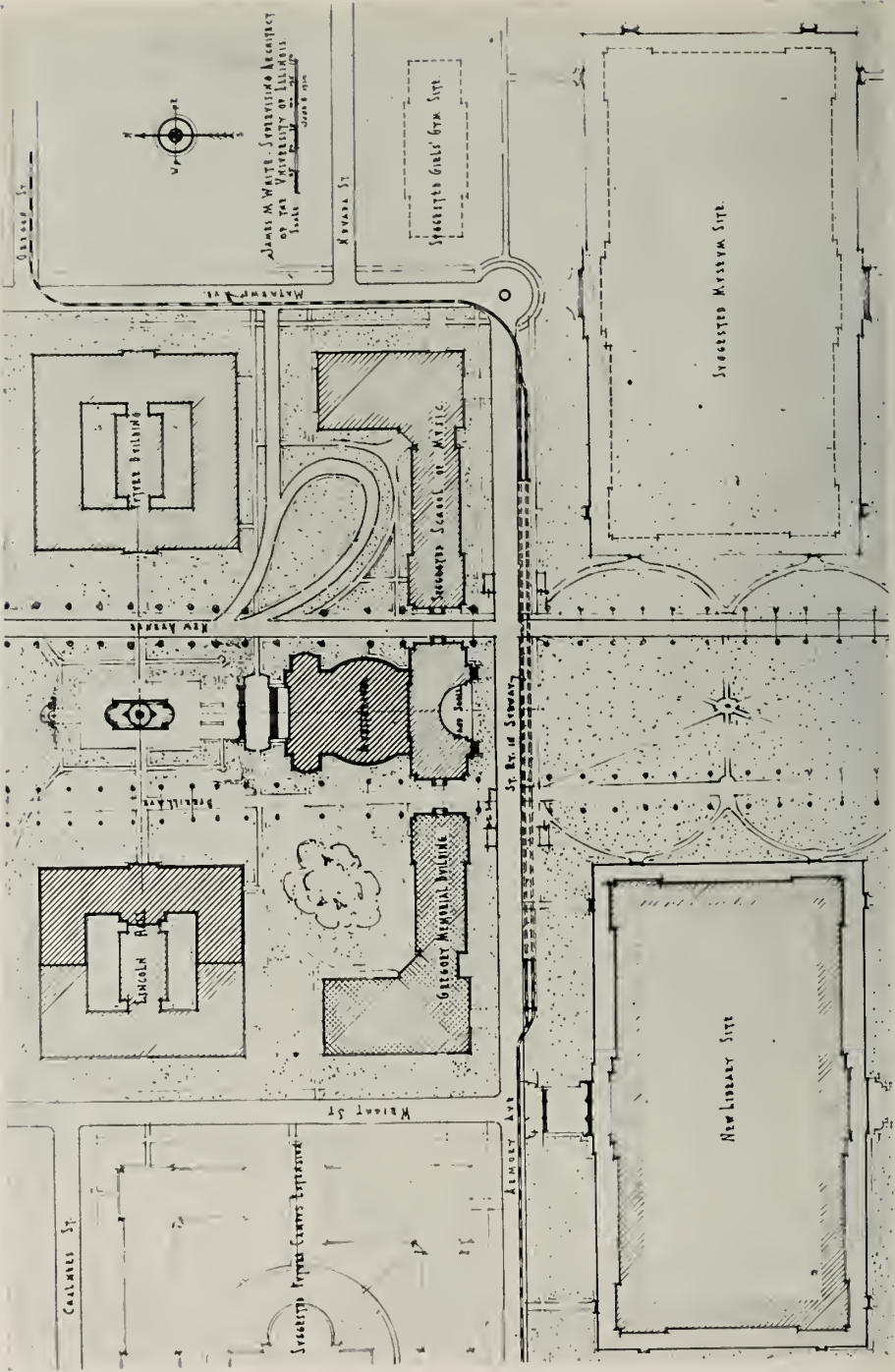


PLATE II.



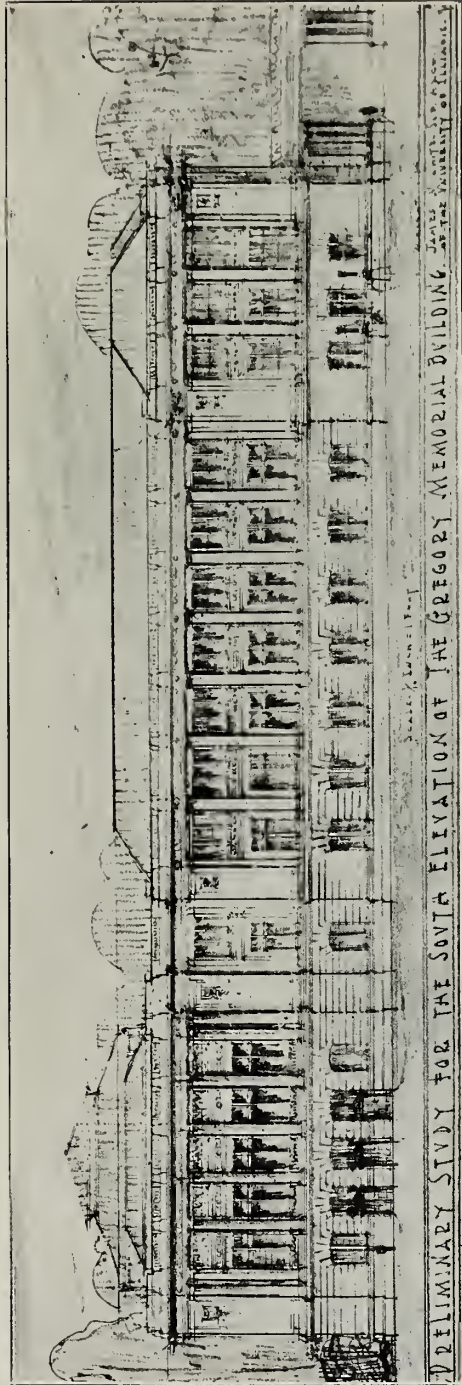


PLATE IV.







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